

**2019 Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant Competition  
July 26, 2019**

Shauna Knox: Good afternoon and welcome to the Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant Competition Technical Assistant Webinar offered by the Office of Safe and Supportive Schools. The purpose of this webinar is to provide information on and answer questions that relate to the Trauma Recovery and Demonstration Grant Competition application process. My name is Shauna Knox and I am the Competition Manager for the Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant. I will be your point of contact at the Department and in so doing, I'll answer all of your Grant-related questions. You can submit your questions to me at [traumarecovery@ed.gov](mailto:traumarecovery@ed.gov) or reach me by telephone at 202-453-5953.

In this presentation, I'll offer general information on the Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant and I'll conclude with a few Frequently Asked Questions and Answers. In the event that your question is not answered during the presentation, please direct your question to [traumarecovery@ed.gov](mailto:traumarecovery@ed.gov) and I'll send you a response as soon as I can. The notice inviting applications and the application package for the Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant Competition were published on Friday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The deadline for application submission for the Grant is August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Please note that all applications must be submitted electronically via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

The information presented in this webinar will be best understood when reviewed in tandem with the instructions for the application and the application package. The link location for both the instructions for the application and the application package is <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/trauma-recovery>. This presentation will not cover all of the information included in the application package but rather, it will provide a general overview of the application and offers specific points of clarification for questions that are not directly addressed in the application package. This webinar will adhere to the agenda that is now appearing on your screen.

I'll begin by providing you with program overview and priorities. We'll progress to the specific application requirements, the review process, selection criteria, reporting and accountability requirements, and I'll address the grant

implementation obligations and close with Frequently Asked Questions and Answers.

Let's begin with the program overview. The Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant Program published on Friday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and it will accept applications until Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019. As previously mentioned, all applications must be submitted electronically at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applicants may apply for funding for up to five years or 60 months with an expected annual award range of \$500,000.00 to \$1.5 million. We anticipate making four to 10 grant awards under this program for fiscal year 2019.

Let's talk more specifically about the purpose of the program. The Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant Program provides competitive grants to state educational agencies to enable students from low-income families who have experienced trauma to access trauma-specific mental health services that are provided for trauma that negatively affects the student's educational experience. The program does allow for parents to request services on behalf of a student that meets the stated criteria.

The grant application references some defined terms. So, let's be clear about what they mean. In this application, an SEA will identify the measures and threshold of poverty it intends to use for the purposes of this program from among the measures in Title 1 Part A as indicated in ESEA Section 1113(a)(5)(A) for the definition of "Student from a low-income family." The definition of "trauma" is relatively broad and based on the way the Substance Abuse in Mental Health Services Administration defines it. Specifically, for the purpose of this program, "Trauma" means an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, or emotional well-being. For the purpose of this grant program, "Parent" is defined as a legal guardian with whom the child lives, who is designated to be legally responsible for the child's welfare.

There are many possible trauma-specific mental health services. To help identify the kind of support we are referencing, we include here a list of examples in the definition. We caveat the potential trauma-specific mental health services with this important note: medical services are not allowable uses of funds under this

grant. In general, mental health counselling is not prohibited by this limitation. However, any mental health service provided by a psychiatrist would need to be carefully evaluated by the grantee before services are rendered. Because psychiatrists are trained medical doctors, they can prescribe medications and may spend time with patients on medication management as part of treatment. Funding from this program must not be used to provide these medical services or any medical procedure.

With all of this in mind, let's dig into the details of the program. The entities eligible to apply for this grant program are state educational agencies. An SEA may choose to apply independently or in partnership with one or more non-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, or any state or local mental health agency. An SEA may also choose to partner with an LEA to apply for the grant. If an SEA elects to apply for the grant in collaboration with an approved partner, that SEA may apply under the competitive preference priority on the basis of that partnership. To view the complete application package, please go to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/trauma-recovery>. To view the instructions for the application, visit the said, or register at the address featured in the third bullet of this slide. Please ensure that before submitting your application, you read through the complete application package.

We'll now review the program priorities. For fiscal year 2019 and any subsequent year in which the Department makes awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this competition has one absolute priority and one competitive preference priority. The absolute priority is that the grant must empower individual students or their parents on behalf of the student, where appropriate, from low-income families who have experienced trauma to obtain trauma-specific mental health services from the providers that best meet their needs. The grant is intended to support students whose trauma is impacting their educational experiences. For example, negative effects on attendance, behavior, academic performance, or a measure identified by the SEA in its application. To meet this absolute priority, the applicant must support trauma-specific mental health services that are unaffordable, not already covered by insurance, issued from state-licensed service providers and issued from service providers that are secular, neutral, and non-ideological.

Applicants that address the competitive preference priority may receive up to five additional points for applications that demonstrate that the program will build and maintain partnership to support students recovering from trauma. It is not mandatory that an applicant establish a partnership. Rather, if an applicant does submit evidence of one, it will receive the competitive preference priority. The priority is intended to encourage applicants to partner with appropriate entities to best serve students and to build state and local capacity. An SEA may partner with one or more state or local mental health agencies, and receive points under the competitive preference priority since the agencies are local or state entities. To meet this priority, an SEA may partner with one or more local or state entities to implement the project. The application must include a Memorandum of Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding signed by both the authorized representative of the SEA and the partnering entity. The memorandum must specify how both the SEA and its collaborating partner will provide resources and/or administer services that are likely to substantially contribute to positive outcomes for the proposed project. Points will be awarded based on the strength of the partnership agreement and the quality of the management plan as reflected in the MOA or MOU which articulates the roles and responsibilities of each partner and not based on the number of partners.

We'll now discuss the application requirements. In order for an application to receive an award, it must adhere to the following requirements. The first requirement is for the SEA to describe its approach to increasing access to trauma-specific mental health services using the Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant and other resources. The SEA must describe its approach to increasing access to trauma-specific mental health services while planning to use in total, no more than 15% of grant funds for grant administration which may include collaboration with other agencies or training for LEA or school-based staff, community members, or other appropriate individuals provided through this program. The SEA must also describe how this work will complement rather than duplicate existing efforts to provide school-based mental health services and how the project funds will supplement and not supplant non-federal funds that would otherwise be available for activities funded under this program. This is an opportunity for the SEA to connect the dots between its proposal and other ongoing work in the state.

The second application requirement includes multiple components and requires an applicant to describe its approach to identifying, referring, and serving students

through the trauma recovery program. The SEA must describe its approach to identifying, referring, and serving students who need trauma-specific mental health services using this grant. There are five parts to this application requirement specifically:

A) The application must detail how a student or a parent on behalf of a student would access the program. To that end, the SEA must describe how it will support schools and LEAs in identifying, referring, and serving students from low-income families whose experience with trauma is affecting school performance including academic progress, behavior, attendance at school, or another measure proposed by the SEA in its application. One way an SEA might propose to identify students is by using trauma screening tools or trauma assessments. If an SEA anticipates using that approach, in its application, the SEA should describe any such tools that are already used in schools in the state, or the SEA will develop or recommend such tools and how the SEA will train school staff and, as appropriate, community members to identify symptoms of trauma. As previously mentioned, an SEA may use no more than 15% of grant funds in total for grant administration which may include cost related to training LEA or school-based staff on how to use trauma screening or a trauma assessment tool.

B) The SEA must also describe its process for establishing that a student requesting services is eligible including how it will confirm that a student has experienced trauma, that the trauma has had a negative impact on school performance such as attendance, referrals for behavior, academic achievement or grades, or another measure proposed by the SEA in its application, and that the student is a student from a low-income family including the specific poverty measure and thresholds the SEA will use from among those available for use in Title 1 Part A.

C) The SEA must also describe how it will include private school students from low-income families on an equitable basis. We'll discuss this requirement further in the next slide.

D) The application should also describe how the SEA will obtain prior written, informed consent from the parent of a child under 18 to participate in any mental health assessment or service funded under the program.

E) Finally, the applicant must describe how it will ensure that the Department grant fund only support services that the student or parent affirm are unaffordable, not covered or insufficiently covered by public or commercial health insurance programs. In obtaining prior written, informed consent, an SEA could for example, include a question about whether an individual student has access to public or commercial health insurance that would support access to the provider from whom an individual is requesting services. The inclusion of such a question on a form confirming written, informed consent for mental health assessment or services under this program would meet the SEA's obligation related to insurance.

As mentioned on the previous slide, an SEA must provide equitable services for students in non-public schools using funds received through the trauma recovery program. Accordingly, an SEA must consult with private school officials using whatever channels they normally use for communicating with private schools or organizations concerning services for students about the design of the program including how the SEA will conduct outreach to eligible private school students and families. An SEA does not need to set aside a particular amount of funds for private school students as compared with public school students. Rather, the SEA must make services available on an equal basis to all eligible students regardless of attendance at a public or private school. The SEA will address the requirement of this provision which requires that an SEA take into account the number and educational needs of the children to be served. However, this means that SEAs must be neutral as between public school and private school students, in approving request for services under the program.

In order for an application to receive an award, it must adhere to the requirement that the SEA describe its approach to paying eligible providers or trauma-specific mental health services. The application must detail the criteria the SEA will use to determine that a provider offers trauma-specific mental health services, how it will ensure providers are state-licensed for the services they offer, and the method the SEA will use to offer relevant information about eligible providers to students and parents seeking support. An SEA may, but is not required to, create a list of providers as a resource for students or parents. However, an SEA must consider a request for a provider that is not on its list on the same basis and provide support if the provider requested by the student or parent offers trauma-specific mental health services and is state-licensed for the services he or she provides. The SEA must also describe how it will ensure that the provider is secular, neutral, and non-

ideological without limiting the choice of providers to a list generated by the SEA. That is an SEA has flexibility to design its program by establishing eligible providers proactively and reviewing additional requested providers or solely review requested providers.

The SEA must submit a specific timeline for planning, outreach, and service delivery which specifies message for communicating the availability of funds, how services will be provided, how payments will be issued to providers with minimal burden on students and parents, and a description of how grant activities will be continuously improved. The SEA must submit a list of key project personnel and a description of each of their qualifications to serve in the identified role. At minimum, this list must include the project director, key project personnel, and project consultant or subcontractors as applicable. The SEA should include a resume for all key project personnel and any additional description of training and qualifications. The SEA must submit a description of how it will document the result of the grant once it is funded and continuously improve service to support student academic success. This will include a description of how the SEA will document the specific type of trauma-specific mental health services supported by the project, how the applicant will share the results of the project, and how the program will promote improved capacity in other communities and schools. The SEA must describe how it will define changes in attendance, behavior, and academic progress. The application must also describe its approach to measuring student and/or parent satisfaction with the grant-funded service. Finally, the SEA must explain how it will use the information gathered during the grant period for continuous improvement. The SEA must provide a specific project budget which specifies the portion of funds that will be used for outreach, administration and continuous improvement as compared with funds that directly support trauma-specific mental health services for students.

Use the checklist provided in this application package to ensure your application is complete before submitting it. Make sure all of the required forms are included and signed by an authorized representative of your organization. Transmit the application by the deadline date and time. When submitting your application electronically, you must use grants.gov at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Unless you qualify for an exception in accordance with the instructions found in the notice inviting applications, you must submit your application electronically.

Let's now discuss the review process for this program. When you submit your application electronically, a PR/Award number will be automatically generated. Please refer to this PR/Award number when you reach out to the Department regarding your application. Each application will be screened to ensure that the program eligibility requirements are met, and all necessary forms are signed by the authorized representative and included in the submitted application. During the review process, eligible applications will be assigned to a panel of independent reviewers who will evaluate and score your proposal according to the selection criteria in your application package. Your application will receive a score from 0 to 100 dependent on how well it addresses the selection criteria. If you are addressing the competitive preference priority, your application may also be eligible to receive an additional five points depending on how well it addresses this priority.

A grant award notification will be sent to the applicants whose application fit in the appropriate range to be awarded a grant. All applicants, both awardees and non-awardees will receive peer reviewer comments approximately six to eight weeks after grant awards have been announced. Applicants who do not receive an award will be notified by letter. Please ensure your application submission features a valid mailing address for both the project director and the authorized representatives for peer reviewer comment delivery.

We'll now discuss selection criteria. Peer reviewers will receive the same selection criteria guidance that is included in the application package. To avoid any potential conflict of interest, the peer reviewers evaluating your application will not be from your state. Reviewers will not be able to contact you for clarity and they are also not expected to do additional research to decipher an application grant proposal. So please ensure your submission is both clear and thorough. While there are no page limits or formatting requirements, we encourage applicants to address the selection criteria in an organized and consistent manner. Please keep in mind that reviewers will be reviewing an applications electronically so information should be arranged in an uncomplicated format. Not including the five competitive preference priority points, the maximum amount of points to be awarded is 100 points.

In the determining the significance, the secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project is likely yield findings that may be utilized by other appropriate agencies and organizations. In addition, we consider the extent to which the



proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population and the potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings.

In determining the significance of the proposed project, the secretary considers the quality of the proposed project design. Specifically, this criterion focuses on how appropriate the proposed project is to the target population and the extent to which it will successfully address the need. Under this selection criteria, attention is also given to the extent to which the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. Finally, under this criterion, the secretary considers the quality of the proposed demonstration design and procedures for documenting project activities and results.

The quality of project services carries the most emphasis at 30 points. The secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the secretary considers the extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services. Also, the quality of plans for providing an opportunity for participation in the proposed project of students enrolled in private schools.

The secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the secretary considers the following factors: the qualifications including relevant training and experience of the project director or principal investigator; and the qualifications including relevant training and experience of key project personnel.

Finally, the secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

We'll now talk through the reporting and accountability requirements for the application. The performance measures for the program are: The cumulative and unduplicated number of students who selected their providers with the support of funds from this grant for trauma-specific mental health services. The cumulative and unduplicated number and percentage of students or parents that report satisfaction with the services provided under the grant, particularly their satisfaction with the program's success in addressing the trauma symptoms of the student. The final performance measure is the percentage of students that have received trauma-specific mental health services and improved their school attendance in comparison to a baseline of the same student's attendance record prior to receiving services through this grant.

Let us now discuss the grant application instructions. You may access the grant application at the web address visible on the slide. You'll need to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System or DUNS number. You can request one at the website featured in the first paragraph of the slide. Be sure to anticipate up to two days of wait time before you are issued a DUNS number. You'll also need to be registered with the System for Award Management at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) in order to successfully apply for this grant. When registering with [sam.gov](http://sam.gov), you'll be required to provide a Taxpayer ID number or TIN number and taxpayer name. If you already have a SAM registration and you haven't updated it since last year, you may need to reactivate your account.

SAM registration can take up to two weeks, so please register at [sam.gov](http://sam.gov) as soon as possible. If you need help registering for a System Award Management number, refer to the Quick Start Guide featured on the SAM website. Please, if it is at all possible, do not wait for the deadline to upload your grant application. We cannot accept any application after 11:59 PM on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 even if there are technical difficulties beyond your control. Once you've submitted your application, you'll receive an automatic notification of receipt with a tracking number. You

should also receive a PR/Award number which will be used to identify your application at the department. If you haven't received both the notification of receipt and the PR/Award number, you should not consider your application to be completely uploaded. Please also be careful to adhere to the document naming convention specified on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Now, let us review some Frequently Asked Questions. Is there a cap on how much money an SEA can provide to support a single student? No, there is no specific cap. Each traumatic event is unique, and each individual student's needs will vary. The SEA must ensure that it uses funds responsibly and only for allowable costs - those that are reasonable, necessary, and allocable under this program.

Do I have to have a partner in order to apply? No, establishing a partnership with a nonprofit, IHE, or state or local mental health agency is optional. An applicant that does establish such a partnership receives competitive preference priority points, based on the strength of the partnership and the quality of the management plan, if the applicant describes the partnership in its application, including by providing evidence of any specific agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding.

Can funds be used to support the mental health needs of a parent? No, funds are available exclusively to provide services for a student from a low-income family who has experienced trauma that is negatively impacting that student's educational experience. Funds must not be used for parents, but parents may request funds on behalf of their eligible student.

How does an SEA communicate eligible providers to students and their parents? An SEA may, but is not required to, provide a list of eligible providers to help students and their parents access services. However, even if an SEA creates such a list, an SEA must consider request to access services from the provider that best meets the child's individual needs.

Should I distribute funds to LEAs? Generally, no, an SEA will not distribute funds to LEAs. Rather, an SEA, or an SEA in partnership with a nonprofit organization, IHE, or state or local mental health agency, will provide for trauma-specific mental health services by paying providers of such services who meet the needs of individual students participating in the Trauma Recovery program. An SEA may, at its discretion, use some of the administrative portion of its funds to support

training for schools, LEAs, and community members on how to use any trauma screener or trauma assessment the SEA, at its discretion, recommends.

What services are allowable under this program? A broad range of services are allowable under this program including those SAMHSA has identified in its “Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach” trauma-specific intervention such as trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, trauma-related cognitive processing therapy, relaxation training, biofeedback, breathing training, exposure therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, narrative therapy, skills training in affective and interpersonal regulation, stress inoculation training, or trauma incident reduction, among others. Any provider of such services must be state-licensed for the services offered.

What services are allowable under this program? Grantees are encouraged but not required to focus their support on intervention that are evidence based. Medical services are not allowable uses of funds under this grant. In general, mental health counseling is not prohibited by the limitation. However, any mental health services provided by a psychiatrist would need to be carefully evaluated by the grantee before services are rendered. Psychiatrists are trained medical doctors who can prescribe medications and may spend time with patients on medication management as part of treatment. Funding from this program must not be used to provide these medical services or any medical procedure.

If a student has insurance, is that student still eligible to participate? Yes, depending on the circumstances. An individual may determine that services are unaffordable because, for example, the co-payment or deductible is too high. Likewise, an individual may determine that a service is insufficiently covered because the cost of the service would exceed an annual insurance cap. In either of these examples, Department grant funds may support services. In addition, SEAs are required to implement policies and procedures that ensure other sources of funding are utilized first when practicable and available for that individual.

SEAs should also refer appropriate individuals to other systems from which a student may be eligible to receive services, for example, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, if appropriate for and desired by that individual student or parent to meet the needs of the student. Consistent with ESEA section 4001(a), an SEA must obtain prior written, informed consent from the parent of each child who

is under 18 years of age to participate in any mental health assessment or service that is funded under this program. In obtaining such prior written, informed consent, an SEA could, for example, include a question about whether an individual student has access to public or commercial health insurance that would support access to the provider from which an individual is requesting services. The inclusion of such a question on a form confirming written, informed consent for mental health assessment or services under this program would meet the SEA's obligation described above related to insurance.

Finally, how does an SEA demonstrate that funds are being distributed to low-income students at private schools equitably? SEAs must consult with private school officials using whatever channels they normally use for communicating with private schools or organizations concerning services for students. Such consultation will address the requirement for meaningful consultation in section 8501(c) of the ESEA. Funds need not be set aside to provide equitable services under this program. Section 8501(a)(4) requires that expenditures for services for eligible private school children must be equal, taking into account the number and educational needs of the children to be served, to the expenditures for participating public school children. By making services available on an equal basis to all eligible students, regardless of attendance at a public or private school, SEAs will address the number and educational needs requirement of this provision. However, this means that SEAs must be neutral, as between public school and private school students, in approving requests for the services under the program.

Again, if there are any questions that we have not answered in this presentation, please direct those questions to [traumarecovery@ed.gov](mailto:traumarecovery@ed.gov). Thank you for joining us and have a good day.